



SUMPTUOUS old age pensions, as now advertised by both political parties, strike a chord of grateful response only in the hearts of the naïve. Others, facing realities squarely, realize that no informed politicians would ever bandy such figures about if they thought any of us was likely to reach an old age to enjoy them in.

Something to Work On

THE recent moving appeal by Lord Luke, president of the Advertising Association, for a plan to "keep the world up to date on what Britain is



and what it can do," was followed by another, in the correspondence columns of *The Times*, from the pens of Lord Teynham and Lord Barnby, demanding "a greater drive in publicity on British policy, past achievements and historical aims and methods." Despite all this, nothing much was heard from Dr. Charles Hill. He is shortly expected, however, to come out with an attractive colour brochure entitled "The Suez Story."

Things to Come

EDUCATION through the television screen, officially launched with instruction including, according to one report, "examples of fruit from great paintings," is said to be guaranteed free from all abrasive advertising. This will reassure many, as long as it holds good, but in some memories the violation of the so-called 'Toddlers' Truce is still fresh and the feeling is that if the transmitters could get around that they can

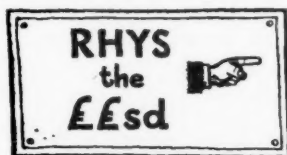
get around this. Parents are therefore recommended to begin home education in commercial-resistance now, against the inevitable day when five minutes' close-up study of Cromwell's warts will be followed by a scrubbed, lisping kiddy telling the class, "My daddy keeps blemish-free with Kleanskyn."

Power of the Press

FRIDAY next, whatever significance it may have in national or other calendars, will mark for millions of Britons a day of blessed deliverance from the Empire Day campaign of the *Daily Express*, during which powerful articles, profuse quotations from Lord Beaverbrook, cut-out pledge forms, appeals to the teaching profession and the distribution of 1,000,000 little Union Jacks have combined in persuading millions of Britons, once prepared to recognize Empire Day, to have nothing to do with it at any price.

Greek to Them

SOUTH Carnarvonshire's indignation over the appointment of a non-Welsh-speaking chief inspector of taxes will draw ready sympathy in this country. When it comes to dealing with Inland



Revenue officials the Englishman well knows the frustrations of not speaking the same language.

Read Any Good Maps Lately?

THE Central Office of Information has distributed to the Press copies of a new quarter-inch map, presumably for review. And why not? "*North Wales and Lancashire*, the latest map to come from the Ordnance Survey, is set in the

wild, mountainous country between Carnarvon and the Potteries, and its cartographer succeeds in conjuring up a vivid picture of his chosen scene. He is perhaps more successful with rustic areas than with urban; his portrayal of the stark hill country west of Llanrwst is lively and urgent, but Stoke-on-Trent emerges a trifle grey, though even here the scarlet threads of the main roads are followed with unerring skill. It is not a map to be digested at a single sitting, but for one reader at least it proved impossible to fold up."

For Student-Rhetoricians

"What would happen," asked Mr. Kadar recently of the Hungarian Parliament, "if someone said 'I do not agree



with Kadar'? Nothing! I would say 'Thank God.' I should be glad to see this." Disappointingly, not one member got up and said it.

No Comment

AMERICAN journalists were inevitably present when President Eisenhower and Field-Marshal Montgomery refought the battle of Gettysburg last week using words only, most conventional of all weapons, and it was surprising that when the President, equivocating on historic tactics, said "Look, I live here. I represent both North and South," no keen Pressman nipped in with a question about his attitude to the other two points of the compass.

Pause to Chew Pens

UP-TO-DATE Maths. masters who pride themselves on throwing overboard

the fusty old problem about men trying to fill a holed water-tank and substituting something more in line with the spirit of the age were particularly interested to read the statement by an American aeronaut that "air travel at 8,000 miles an hour is only thirty years away." They are asking classes to calculate the speed of its approach.

Broken English

AFTER disclosing that Essex chaffinches were picking up an accent from visiting Continental birds a lecturer at the Royal



Veterinary College was asked what the eventual result would be; according to the report he "staunchly maintained his confidence that in the end the English accent would prevail." It seems regrettable that even naturalists won't abandon the idea that we shall go on leading the world.

Back to the Test-Bench

SIX residents of the Marshall Islands who sustained skin lesions, depression of the blood cells and loss of hair from the 1954 Bikini explosions have been submitted to five days of laboratory tests in Chicago, and pronounced to have made "remarkable recoveries." Scientists, though disturbed, think they'll soon have this problem licked.

Arrayed in White Robes

LITTLE interest seems to have been aroused by the news that Britain is to have its own Ku-Klux-Klan. That will come when the advertising men start clashing over the new field of detergent publicity.

Anachronisms

TOLL for the Groves!—the Groves that are no more.
Time passes, and their world gives up the ghost—
Their fireside world, that, come to think of it,
Must also be the world of *Picture Post*.

YOU WANT THE BEST PENSIONS: WE HAVE THEM

PENSIONS FOR ALL. The question is not whether the country can afford to provide them but whether it can afford NOT to provide them.

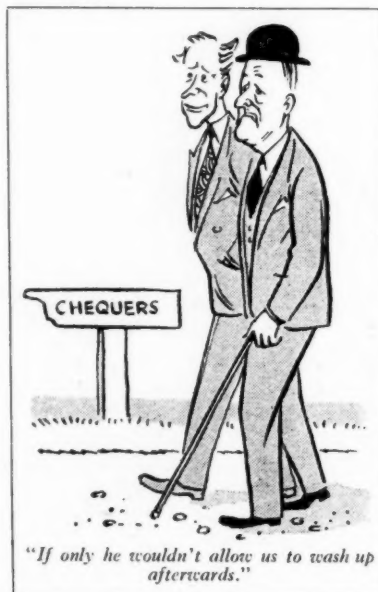
I solemnly say that it CANNOT, and I pledge myself, if you return me to Westminster, to work for a national pensions scheme which, although actuarially sound, will give you what YOU want when you retire.

If my opponent says that he and his party will provide you with more than that, DO NOT BELIEVE HIM. The scheme which I support can NEVER be outbid by any rival scheme.

This is because the actual size of the pensions will be calculated according to an agreed sliding scale. PENSIONS WILL RISE AUTOMATICALLY WHENEVER ANY OPPOSING PARTY PROPOSES TO OFFER MORE.

Although new in its application, this proposal is in full accordance with the most fundamental of democratic principles—which I and my party have always upheld.

My party, however, is also anxious that particular skills should be rewarded, and that those who have made a special contribution to the industry and prosperity of the country should receive some advantage at the end of their working lives.



We therefore propose that pensions should be calculated not only on the basis of a man's weekly earnings but also in the light of:

- (i) the total dividends he has received from the Football Pool Promoters Association;
- (ii) the total number of days' service in the employment of the Government of Ghana; and
- (iii) the total sum received during his working life from strike pay.

I and my party, while realizing that these special advantages detract from the principle of equality, believe that they faithfully reflect the wish of the country to reward those who have contributed most to the creation of modern Britain.

The cost of this pensions scheme cannot be overlooked, especially since the sum required will increase annually. My party therefore propose:

- (i) that after 1967 the increased monies needed shall be provided for by the issuing of unnumbered bank notes; and
- (ii) that after 1977 further monies shall be raised by the sale of unperforated sheets of stamps.

In this way I and my party are confident that the national pensions scheme will prove stable and will later enable the retiring age to be REDUCED until, in the fullness of time, no man, woman or child need work any more.

(Copies of this leaflet, with blue or red headings, may be obtained, 100 for 1s. or 55,000 for £25, from the publishers, or from any auction rooms.) H. F.

Pacific Note

OH, what a nasty word is "bomb,"
So blunt and unsexed,
And how much more so when they add
That awkward aspirate.

How thoughtful of the Ministry,
How civilized and nice
To call the one that Penney built
A "nuclear device."

J. B. BOOTHROYD





Follow Your Leader

By GEOFFREY LINCOLN

FOR all barristers an important secret, for some lucky barristers the only important secret, is the art of being able to do undefended divorce cases in three minutes dead. The achievement of this high-speed record causes great satisfaction to the judge, who isn't all that keen on listening to undefended divorce cases; delight to all your learned friends who are waiting to do other undefended cases; intense joy to the usher, who wants to see his allotment by daylight, and some gratified bewilderment to husbands and wives who wonder that years, sometimes decades, of long-drawn-out matrimony can be fitted into such a short space of time. In fact when they get out of court, their conjugal ties severed, still breathless from the canter through desertion for not less than three years, they are quite likely to ask such puzzled questions as "What happened?" or "And when does the case begin?"

Now it is impossible to do an undefended divorce case about any marriage, however uneventful, in three minutes without asking a number of what are known as leading questions. You are not supposed to ask these; officially and in legal theory leading questions are about as well looked on in the law courts as co-respondent's shoes in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot. However, failure to ask leading questions would extend any divorce case to three hours, bore the judge, reduce the usher

and the learned friends to articulate rage and make your clients wonder how a mere marriage could ever have gone on so long.

In order to ask, or to avoid asking, leading questions it is desirable, although not essential, to know what they are. People other than barristers who appear on television frequently use the phrase "leading question," and invariably wrongly. It comes out like this:

Interviewer: Tell me, Archbishop. Are you in favour of Rock 'n' Roll in Women's Institutes or not?

Archbishop (smiling cagily): Well, now. Isn't that rather a leading question?

In fact, of course, it's not. He's wrong, as usual. A leading question would be: "Tell me, Archbishop. You're in favour of Rock 'n' Roll in Women's Institutes, aren't you?" Or, alternatively, "Tell me, Archbishop, you wouldn't allow Rock 'n' Roll, etc., would you?"

In other words a leading question contains the expected answer all ready and pat and all the suggestible old client or cleric has to do is to supply a simple "Yes" or "No" and nod obediently.

Leading questions in divorce cases start off innocently enough:

"Is your name Arthur Peggs?"
(Not "What is your name?" He may not remember.)

"Were you married on the 10th of August 1922?"

(Not "When were you married?" which would produce no answer at all, as no one ever knows this unless they have just been to Somerset House and looked it up.)

Leading questions, then, follow each other deep into the heart of the matter. Suppose, for instance, that you have a desertion case in which the husband left his wife on July 18, 1949, taking with him nothing but a caged budgerigar, and that he has never been back since. This, apart from the fact of the marriage, is about all you have to prove in an undefended case, and three minutes should be ample. If you use a direct lead there'll be time in hand for a cup of coffee.

Counsel: And on July 18, 1949, your husband left you, didn't he?

Witness: Yes.

Judge: Well really, Mr. Peskett, I have heard some leading questions in my time . . .

You see: too obvious. Besides if anything goes wrong and the case turns up, all neatly typed out, in the Court of Appeal, you are liable to hear some uncharitable comment on your advocacy. Alarmed by this thought you may be frightened off leading questions altogether and try to do it like this:

Counsel: Did anything at all happen in July 1949?

Witness: Yes.



Counsel (hopefully): Ah, now. Just turn to my lord and let him know, in your own words, exactly what it was.

Witness (as the judge begins to write it all down): Wasn't that the year my Auntie Ethel went to the U.S.A.?

Counsel (testily): Possibly. But didn't something else happen?

Witness: I know it was a dreadful summer.

Counsel (encouragingly): Yes?

Witness: I well recall the annual flower show was washed out that year.

Counsel (miserable by now): But didn't something happen about your husband?

Witness: It may well of. Didn't he buy that new sports coat and flannels that year?

Counsel: You mustn't ask me.

Witness (aggrieved): But it's easy for you to remember. You've got it all written down . . .

It wouldn't be over before the cleaners wanted to do out the court or, in the case of a divorce in the provinces,

before the Municipal Clerks Association came to borrow the joint for their rehearsal of *Aida*. The only way to get things moving without risk is to use the "indirect lead," that is the asking of leading questions just off the point. It goes like this:

Counsel (briskly): Now, Mrs. MacWinter. You owned a caged bird, did you not?

Witness: Yes.

Counsel: A budgerigar, I rather gather?

Witness: It was.

Counsel: And on July 18, 1949, did your budgerigar leave the matrimonial home, never to return?

Witness: Yes.

Counsel (triumphantly asking his first

non-leading question): Now, tell my lord in your own words—what went away with the budgerigar? . . .

If Mrs. MacWinter then says the cage she probably doesn't deserve a divorce anyway.

Where did you get that Laugh?

By R. G. G. PRICE

TO the shallow all things are simple. This has been brought home to me by reading a new book on laughter by a distinguished American psycho-analyst.* He explains that disagreement with his theories on repression is evidence of their truth, rather as Marxists sometimes suggest that

reluctance to adopt their views proves that Capitalism puts men into blinkers. Psycho-analysts are certainly hard to fault. I can believe, with an effort, that the stupidity of Dr. Watson is Conan Doyle's revenge on doctors for deceiving children by telling them that babies come in little black bags or that phallic symbols include Chaplin's cane, Groucho Marx's cigar, Mickey Mouse

and drum-majorettes, but I cannot believe that a British gentleman is incapable of kidding owing to an early training which does not allow an outlet for aggression in any form.

At other points in the argument I find myself able to accept part of Dr. Grotjahn's information readily while rejecting some of what he obviously regards as being on the same level of

*BEYOND LAUGHTER. Martin Grotjahn, McGraw-Hill, 45/-

credibility. When, in his section on *The Œdipus Theme in the Wild West Story*, he says there is such a high degree of identification with the hero that many a television viewer at the end of the programme actually limps away with saddle sores, I find it possible to welcome the fact as an interesting contribution to my mental picture of American life; but I cannot help feeling that the statement that the Sphinx in the Œdipus saga returns harmlessly disguised in the form of the cowboy's horse shows a compulsion to work everything in neatly.

Similarly, when he explains the drawings that appeared on walls during the war labelled "Kilroy was here" by saying that the name means Kill-the-King, and hence Œdipus, I must object that there also used to be a similar character called Mr. Chad (leaving aside the question of why the Unconscious should be simultaneously bilingual). There was a saint called Chad, but I do not know whether his family life was anything like that of Œdipus. The psycho-analyst who first pointed out the real significance of Kilroy went on to deal with Beethoven.

I regret that in these wholesome pages I cannot discuss the light that Dr. Grotjahn throws on pinball machines in his examination of *Heaven and Hell in Amusement Parks and Funfairs*, and I can only hint that his discoveries about Ferdinand the Bull are sensational. In neither case do I feel certain that my vague resistance to going along with him may not be due to his being right.

I am on rather firmer ground when I

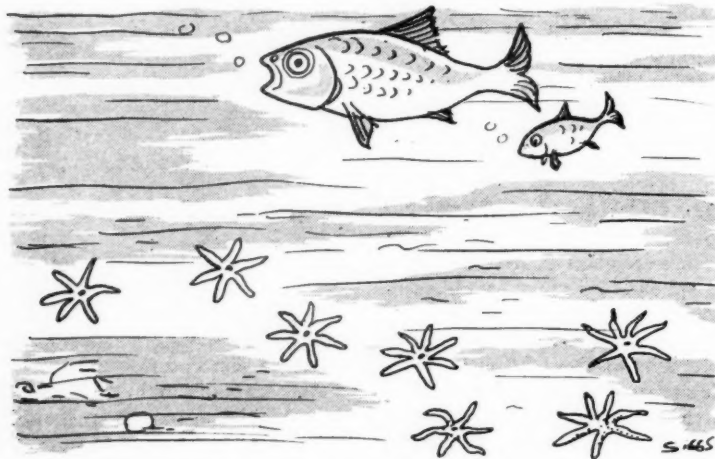
object to his remark that when a woman who faces Christmas shopping with horror and disgust says she suffers from Santa Claustrophobia we are impressed with her witty intelligence. Some of us may be; some of us will applaud anything. As far as I am concerned, whatever the hidden motivation of the witticism, it stinks. This question of the psycho-analysts' standards of humour may explain a good deal. Freud, apparently with approval, quoted "A wife is like an umbrella. At worst, one may take a taxicab." He found this in *Entries in the Album of Prince Carnival*.

In an elaborate section on *Alice in Wonderland and the Joys of Regression*, Dr. Grotjahn claims Alice herself as a phallic symbol. He also wants us to believe that the queer creatures she found in the pool of tears represented the ten brothers and sisters of Lewis Carroll, although there is no evidence of how many creatures there were. The Canary, for example, had several young. As there was exactly one comfit each as a prize after the Caucus race, perhaps Dr. Grotjahn could investigate how many comfits went to a box in mid-Victorian England. By the way, Alice's adventures lack integration and show little love, concern or tenderness. They form a world-destroying fantasy in which wilful, vicious hostility runs wild. They appeal to children and to adults with surplus aggression, schizophrenics and all those who want to ventilate their unconscious without getting into trouble. I hope I belong to the last group; it sounds the most raffish.

Of course, there have been other explanations of *Alice*. A case has been carefully argued for its being a satire on the religious factions in Carroll's Oxford, with easily recognizable references to real people. Then it has been suggested that Carroll was a mathematician and logician and that his professional preoccupations underlie his children's books. I wonder whether this explains Dr. Grotjahn's almost complete neglect of *Through the Looking-Glass*. Can it be because it is nearer to Einstein than to Freud? I am sure it would be quite easy to find an economic pattern—painting the roses would represent the unproductive nature of the fine arts in a monarchy, the theft of the tarts and the trial would expose the farce of non-proletarian justice and the Panther's getting the pie-crust and gravy and meat while the Owl got only the dish would illustrate the division of the product of labour between capital and labour.

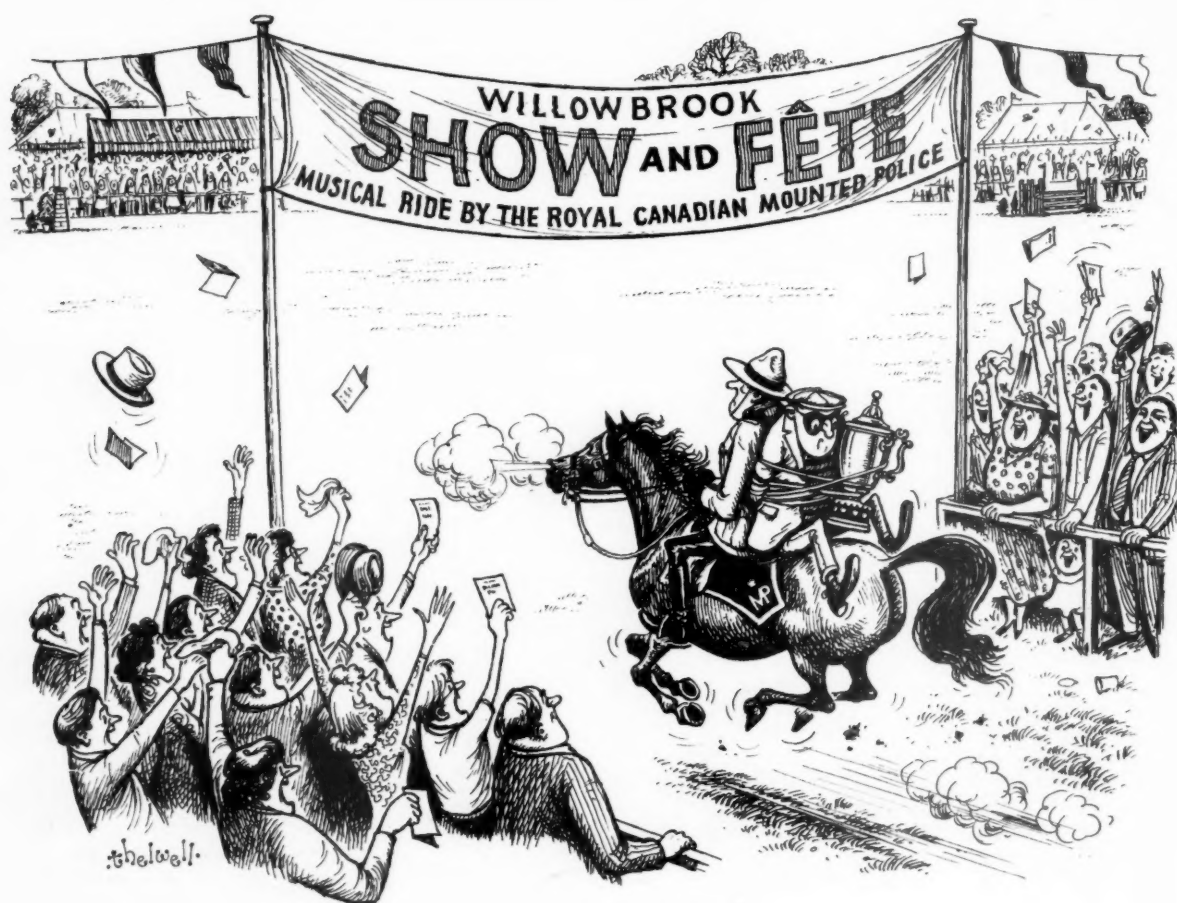
There are innumerable other points of interest which should be brought to the attention of readers of any periodical that takes humour seriously. Humorists are masochistic, melancholic, but mature. Wits are sadistic and, if they fail to transform their desire to murder into wit, liable to migraine. An enormous amount of work on humour has been done, largely in America. Dr. Grotjahn's bibliography covers fifteen pages. There are papers on *The Psychodynamics of Teasing*, *The Response of Schizophrenic Patients to Comic Cartoons Before and After Prefrontal Lobotomy*, *A Mirth Response Test* and *The Favourite Joke in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Interviewing*. I noticed that the author of a Psycho-analytic Study of Cynicism followed it by a work on Talleyrand. Of the innumerable contributions by Freud himself, the one that attracted me most was *A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis*. The illustrations include one of W. C. Fields as Queen Victoria.

One sentence is patently untrue: "The book is, to my regret, not funny." This is modesty carried to a point at which one cannot help suspecting some sexual deviation, some infantile regression in the author. Or can my own confession of being not only interested and stimulated but often amused by it be evidence of some deep-seated flaw in myself?



"Known as the Plough, dear."





After You with the Illusion

By GWYN THOMAS

IF you have a myth, hang on to it. Do not slip it off the leash and let it wander around.

For years I was perfectly happy as a promoter of mystique behind the international rugby matches held at the Cardiff Arms Park. Privately I had regarded them as the greatest acts of mental lapse since the launching of hashish and jazz but I never said so. I just helped build the myth. I lent my tongue in that cause to some of the most alarming nonsense since Nietzsche. "Nothing is more impressive than this outpouring of zealots in a thousand trains from all the valleys to the north. The molten life of our ancient tribes flows south as if at the call of Owen Glyndwr making his promised return

from his sleep among the grey rocks." If Glyndwr took one look at the sixty thousand rain-driven shamans roaring and gaping behind their monstrous rosettes at the Arms Park he would go back at the double and tell those grey rocks that this time it was for keeps.

Or, another line: "You have not stood at the fervent core of the real Welsh heart until you have taken your place in a capacity crowd at the Arms Park to sing the Welsh national anthem." Try standing there. If this is the Welsh heart the valves are really jumping. The band, a brisk lot nourished on Sousa and marching behind goats, is never fewer than three bars ahead of the herd. The singers themselves, when not worrying about what hybrid chant will

emerge from that racket to do service for the anthem written by the James boys of Pontypridd, are all trying to harmonize with the echo that is coming three seconds late from the corners of the vast stand.

Anyway I was caught out. Willie Silcox the Psyche told me at Tasso's Coffee Tavern that my material about the great Welsh myths was getting a bit thin; so I should go to one of these sporting events. I told Silcox that prophets could surely dispense with actuality. Had Taliesin, I asked, been present at those battles from which he had wrung such first-rate woe? Silcox was sure he had and he had already fished out a reference to Taliesin running like a hare in some retreat from the

North Midlands and composing easily on the hoof. Even so, I said, I hated crowds. I cited an uncle who had been caught in a swirling mob at Birchtown and had spent hours in our kitchen showing off the toothprints in his body and even identifying people from them. Silcox was certain that the Arms Park had a system of ingenious concrete boxes into which groups of about thirty people were shepherded to watch the game in safety.

We agreed to go, and to take with us my neighbours Edwin Pugh the Pang and Teilo Dew the Doom, who have grown no happier since they have been attending that adult-education class on the world's shrinking food supplies. I agreed with Silcox that exposure to some sort of gladiatorial clash would help give these two voters a cooler view of man's threatening mouth.

Silcox got the tickets. We went to Tasso's on the Friday night to pick them up. We found Tasso standing behind his tea-urn and peeping out without

love or confidence at two elements who were sitting in the shop with Silcox. Both were men noted even in Meadow Prospect, a compost heap of neuroses, for taking a nervous view of life. One, Nathan Hughes, was fitting his mouth around a long, trumpet-like instrument. With one blow in ten he would get a note out of this contrivance which drove a score of people away from Tasso's as their fingers touched the latch. The other voter, Goronwy Heppenstall, had in his hand a huge bell which he shook every time Nathan's instrument came to life.

"This is the way out for these boys," said Silcox. "Nathan and Goronwy have heard articles like these, the Alpine horn and the cowbell, being used on the radio at soccer internationals and they are going to use them at Cardiff to-morrow. It will give them a new confidence. It will also remind them of the healing tranquillity of the Alps."

"Unhappiness in Lombardy," said Edwin Pugh, "first drove Tasso up here to Meadow Prospect. After years

of study Silcox has found the combination that will drive him back there."

The following morning we called for Teilo Dew. There was the sound of hammering from a shed in the back. Some neighbours had gathered around the shed, having heard Teilo say more than once that his great wish was to fashion a definitive coffin for the hopes of mankind. Mrs. Dew, from the kitchen, told us that she could not be sure that Teilo was on this tack, but only the night before she had been put off her cheese and onion supper by a long talk from Teilo on why a desperate nihilism might not yet be a better bet than the Band of Hope.

Teilo came out of the shed looking quite cheerful. He was carrying a roughly shaped box, quite large but certainly no coffin.

"I can't stand on concrete," he said. "My sinuses stand up and sing at any hint of cold concrete. So I will stand on that box and be comfortable."

"That's a pretty tall box," said



"I thought so—doing your homework when you should be watching television!"

Edwin, "and these football crowds are fierce. If they can't see with you on that box you'll finish up in it."

"Oh, they'll understand," said Teilo, and the neighbours were surprised and pleased by his simple confidence.

On our way to the station we were joined by Nathan Hughes and Goronwy Heppenstall, carrying the Alpine horn and cowbell and putting up with a lot of gibes and catcalls from some elements in woollen caps. One of them was imitating a cow. I recognized him as a boy with a long record for roaming about the streets of Meadow Prospect on a Saturday morning wearing a massive Balaclava helmet and maddening the voters with insolent bits of mimicry. Nathan Hughes had his horn held above his head like a club and looking tormented. We tried to hurry our steps, but Willie Silcox came hurrying out of a shop and said he wanted us to see Nathan and Goronwy safely to Cardiff.

"They're a bit shy," he said, "and if they try to hide those fine extravert contraptions, keep them at it."

We went into the station. The train was packed when it came in. When the people in the compartments saw us, Hughes with his horn, Heppenstall with his cowbell and Dew with his box held stiffly in front of him, they told Redvers Hallett the guard that they would get out and do something to the station and the track if he did not put us five safely in the van at the end of the train. So we were put in there, with some dogs, pigeons and budgerigars. Hallett had a budgerigar in a cage at his side and it was clear from the way he looked at this bird that it meant something special to him. He was so absorbed he did not even ask us why Heppenstall and Hughes should be lugging such unWelsh instruments into Cardiff. Hallett told us about the budgerigar. Its name was Ewart. He had taught it to recite whole

passages from the speeches of well-known libertarians, urging men and women to cast off their shackles. The budgerigar could not be made to shut up, and Hallett's wife had to bear the brunt of it. After listening to Ewart the budgie speak quite clearly on the degradation of women she ran off with an insurance agent and an endowment of Hallett's which had just ripened.

"Since she left, Ewart hasn't spoken a word," said Hallett, and we all said how sorry we were to hear of this whirl of deprivations that had struck Hallett. Edwin tried mentioning the names of some famous Radicals to the budgerigar and kept saying "Come on, Ewart, let's have you," but Ewart just stayed dumb in the corner of its cage, staring at Hughes and Heppenstall as if it understood exactly how they felt.

"I'm coming off duty when we reach Cardiff and I'm taking Ewart to a cousin of mine who keeps a pub there. They



say the smell of drink brings a budgie's vocal urge to the peak. Besides I hate my cousin. He's a great traditionalist and when he hears the subversive chatter that comes from Ewart he's going to be upset."

At Cardiff an immense crowd was pouring down a narrow street to the ground. When they saw us approach, Hallett in the lead with his bird cage, they opened ranks to let us pass, glad that the Celts in their flight from funerals as a way of life seemed now with our tableau to have completed the trip. Nathan and Goronwy said they would need a few pints to work up the sort of blithe expression they had seen on the faces of the hornblowers and cowbell ringers shown on the television.

Hallett took us to his cousin's pub. It was a tumbledown little place in which the dart board seemed to be the only clean and stable thing. All around us patriotism and benevolence had flowed in with the fourth and fifth pint. Some people, seeing Teilo's box followed by Nathan and Goronwy looking so sad and tense with those instruments, thought they were needy buskers and told Teilo to keep his box the right side up if he wanted a Christian response from the drinkers. We found ourselves pinned in a corner with a short mad man who had been present at every international match played at Cardiff since 1905. He explained why he had disagreed with every decision ever made by the referees at these events. He was enraged and almost killed Teilo Dew with his glass when Dew suggested that he had probably got hold of some false rule book devised by some droll squire who was out to twit the Celts for their devotion to the handling code. Edwin Pugh quietened the man by quoting to him a poem by Housman and that Methodist hymn which says just about the last word on transience and death, even among referees. I fingered the clapper of Heppenstall's cowbell and pulled it gently from time to time to throw in a graveyard overtone.

At three the pub emptied and Hallett's cousin took us into the kitchen at the back. There we had barley wine and cockles and we all looked at each other with a fine sensual glow. Hallett's cousin wept a little when he heard the story about Hallett's wife and the insurance man because he himself was very drunk by now and had been prone to disaster

in his own love life. But Hallett was laughing and praising insurance. We heard the Welsh anthem being sung from the rugby ground. We all stood up, stiff as ramrods. Heppenstall and Hughes did what they could by way of accompaniment and Teilo Dew beat on his box to suggest a drum. Even Ewart the budgie got up from its corner and stood on a perch but no sound came from it. Then Edwin Pugh got sad and started making a symbol of the budgie in whose throat the wild words of golden affirmation had died. The cloak of banality falls, said Edwin, and the glorious dreams of a laundered species shuffle off into a shabby gloom. I could see that Edwin had Hallett's cousin foxed and uneasy and he had paused and shaken his head once or twice on his way to get fresh supplies of

the barley wine and cockles. I nudged Edwin and asked him why we should spoil a good thing. Every few minutes the crowd in the ground roared and we stood up and roared with it.

The crowd had been streaming away from the ground for half an hour when we left the pub. As we stood at the door of the kitchen Ewart the budgie came to life and made one of the clearest statements I have ever heard from bird to man. It was a vigorous paragraph from a speech by Henry Richards made in 1870 explaining why drink for the next two hundred years will continue to rob the working man of his full dignity. Hallett's cousin had his ear in the cage, not missing a word.

It was a good session. Now all we have to do is think up a story to tell Silcox about the match itself.



"Windscreen? Round the back for a car wash."

Brush up Your Basic

By VICTOR STREETER

"WHEN the Hungarians get to the end of their Basic English learning," says Doctor Arnold, "the two parts of their mouths which come together will be very strong."

"You mean their jaws?" says the new teacher.

"Sixpence, please," says Mr. Croupier, who keeps the money box. Every teacher who says a word which is not Basic puts sixpence in the box. The new teacher puts one in now. He does not seem happy. *Jaws* is not a Basic word.

"They say Mr. Shaw was wrong because he said the alphabet must have more letters," says somebody. "We say there must be less words in the word book. But are we right to say *the two parts of the mouth which come together*, and not . . . ?"

"Do not say it again," says a friend of his, "or you will put another sixpence in the box."

"To change what we are saying," says Doc Arnold, "isn't it true that in America they have a machine which puts letters on paper when a person says something into it?"

Somebody says this is true.

"If it is true," says the Doc, "then the bigger alphabet will come."

"What then?" says a person.

"Then," says the Doc, "we will have more letters to put in less words, which we will say more times. Please give a push to the sugar pot."

Somebody gives a push to the pot, and sends it from the other side of the table. The Doc puts much sugar in his warm liquid.

"Please, will somebody give me some knowledge?" says Mr. Chips.

"Knowledge of what?" says somebody.

"It is like this," Mr. Chips says. "Every day I do much talking in English to my boys. What I say goes into their ears. They have knowledge, but a big number of English words does not come out of their mouths. How will I make this better?"

"This is how I do it," says Mr. Squeers. "I commence to do something and say to them *What am I doing?*"

"Sixpence for *commence*," says Mr. Croupier.

Mr. Squeers puts a sixpence in the box. Then he does not seem as happy as he was before he put the sixpence in the box.

"How to get the boys to do more English talking is a hard thing," says Doc Arnold. "But there is the talking machine. It talks, and the boys say what it said."

"There are songs, like *Ten Green Bottles*," says another person.

"Songs have many words which are not Basic," says the Doc. "The bottles in *Ten Green Bottles* have a long word between them and the fall."

"Which word?" says Mr. Chips, with a bad light in his eye. Mr. Croupier is very straight in his seat. His hands are round the money box. The box is ready.

"I will not say which word," says Doc Arnold. "I put it up to your . . ." He takes a look round the room. Mr. Croupier is keeping his breath from going in or coming out. His face is going red.

"I-i-it's a dry day," says Mr. Squeers. He seems happy. Mr. Croupier does not. Mr. Croupier is putting the box on the table.

"I've a suggestion," says the new teacher. Mr. Croupier's hand goes quicker to the box than it went from it.

"Sixpence is the price of your suggestion," says Mr. Croupier. The new teacher puts another sixpence in the box. He is not happy.

* * * * *

On the journey back to our school rooms the new teacher says to me, "When we get to the end of this work in twelve weeks, and we are out of work, what will you do?"

"I have no knowledge," I say. "But there will be enough sixpences in Mr. Croupier's box then to keep us all for another twelve weeks."



Archbishop Leighton

1611—1684

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON's Presbyterian sire
Wrote *Sion's Plea against the Prelacie*
For which he fell beneath the Laudian ire
And suffered scourging and the pillory.
Broken by long imprisonment and shame
The old man died, bereft of all his senses,
In spite of which his learned son became
Archiepiscopus Glaswegiensis
And boldly strove to end religious riot
Till, hopelessly enmeshed in rival skeins,
He fled to Sussex seeking peace and quiet
And rests beneath the church at Horsted Keynes.
No member of the congregation listens
More closely when Macmillan reads the Lessons.

E. V. MILNER

Middle Class Album



THE L.S.D. OF CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS

A "Punchfacts" report, by **BERNARD HOLLOWOOD**

SCHUMPENFELT and N'gama in their book *Middle Class and Proud of It* (published by the Department of Advertising, London School of Economics) defined the middle classes as "income units in receipt of £650-£5,000 per annum." No writer interested in circulation and royalties would quarrel with this very generous and comprehensive grouping, and it will surprise no one that for the cheap paper-backed edition to be issued shortly the lower figure has been reduced to £460 p.a.

In this inquiry, conducted in the classical sociological terrain of York, Yorks., I have borrowed the Schumpenfelt-N'gama definition together with a number of their fact-finding methods.

To break the ice let us examine two fairly typical family, or income unit, budgets.

Budget "A" (Mr. Shawcross)

INCOME: £4,750. Mr. S. is consultant to the plastics division of the North-east Carbon Authority.

EXPENDITURE:	£
Rates and Schedule "A" ..	90
Clothes	450
Housekeeping	1,215
Business expenses	1,370
Stamps	18
Prep school (boy)	370
Public school (girl)	420
Cars and tractors	385
Superannuation and Insurance	1,050
Entertainment	725
Carbon	36
Tax Accountant	200
	£6,329

Mr. Shawcross's rhubarb farm "Long Acre" loses about £5,000 a year, so he pays no income tax or surtax. "I find it

virtually impossible to keep going," he told me. "My son is entered for Eton, Winchester and Rugby, but I doubt whether I shall be able to afford one of them, let alone all three. Hilda, my wife, has to go out to work (she works nights at Drumlin's in the High Street) during the children's holidays because, quite frankly, we need her bed. When I think what my old father managed to do in the old days on an income of less than £4,000 it makes me so wild I could scream.

"We don't bother to collect family allowances: it's our only way of registering a protest against the Government's suicidal economic policy."

Budget "B" (Mr. Earnshaw)

INCOME: £575. (Mr. Earnshaw collects H.P. payments for the Yorkshire Hydro-Electric Development Co.).

EXPENDITURE:	£
Income tax	nil
Superannuation	14
Union dues, etc.	57
Car	140
Burial Club	60
Housekeeping, repairs, telephone, tape-recorder, sheet music, etc.	310
Rent	63
Tobacco, drink, prescriptions	118
Holidays	300
Daily Mirror (50 weeks)	2½
	£1,064½

At first sight Mr. Earnshaw seems heavily in the red, but—to use his own words—"family allowances, dividends, paying guests, winnings on the pools and in *Mirror* competitions, my honorarium as secretary of the Bishop's Walk Bowling Club, and very decent contributions to domestic expenses by my elder sons, George, Ulysses and Rex, and my daughters, Mirabelle and Penny, help me to make ends meet."

Mr. E. seemed overjoyed to hear that



1877



DOWN ON HER.

Butcher. "YOU'VE NOT BEEN 'AVIN' SO MANY 'JINTS THIS LAST WEEK OR TWO, MA'AM."

Lady (who has been dabbling in American beef, but does not dare say so). "ER—NO—ER—WE'VE HAD A GOOD DEAL OF GAME SENT US BY SOME FRIENDS IN THE NORTH, YOU KNOW!"

Butcher. "INDIED, MA'AM! NOW WHAT SORT OF GAME DO THEY SEND YOU IN THE MONTH O' APRIL, MA'AM?"

he is middle class. Over a gin-and- tonic in his den (he does part-time work as a club organizer for Littletons' Mail Order Stores) he told me that he is descended on his mother's side from Nathan Drew, one of George III's gardeners. "We can afford few luxuries," he said, "but we insist on making a splash rather with our holiday. It's always the same, three days in Venice among the nobs. Haven't missed a film festival since 1948.

"Inflation? No, I can't honestly say that I agree with all these moaners. There's a lot of money about and I like the feel of it, even if you can't buy so much with it. Can anybody put his hand on his heart and say he prefers the old cheeseparing frugality to our modern method of chucking it about here, there and everywhere? I get quite a kick out of buying a twopenny newspaper: if a fellow's eager to educate himself, I don't see why he shouldn't pay for the privilege.

"The people I really admire are the types who know their way round the

and to retire early in life (automation is being held up because workers can't afford to do this). They want the Government to halt the prices spiral and leave wages and salaries to be settled by collective bargaining. This programme, they feel, is simplicity itself, and they will vote enthusiastically for any party that promises it again in its election manifesto.

2. Education. The trouble here is the eleven-plus. "To get Norman into the Grammar," said Mrs. Chadwick, "we are having to reconstruct our lives. We sold the telly to buy books of acrostics, word-games and such, and we're at it morning till night. Norman will be six in June so we haven't a lot of time."

3. Domestic help. "In the old days we were able to go out two or three mornings a week [this is Mrs. Fern- hough] and earn a nice bit of extra, but there aren't many houses now that can afford a char or cook-help. In any case it's very difficult nowadays to leave your home, what with all the gadgets to

big hotels and the menus. You know, double portion of smoked salmon, steak with french fried and mush- rooms and a crêpe suzette. My daughter, Penny, has luncheon vouchers for the Minster Grill."

What are the chief worries of the English middle class? In spite of Mr. Earnshaw's pugnacious defence of the prevailing socio-economic set-up, I think we can list them in the following order of importance:

1. Inflation.

The people of York are net dis-savers. Fiercely patriotic, they would like to accumulate enough money to invest on the Stock Exchange (the country badly needs new capital)

attend to. Jack says it's a waste of money to rent a 'TV at 14s. a week and not look in all the time, and you can't look in, can you, if you're dusting somebody's house that hasn't got a telly?"

There are grouses, too, about higher rents, fares, expense accounts, coal and car radios, but nothing, I think, is more symptomatic of the middle class dilemma than the attitude to eggs. Mr. Corm, proprietor of the Super-Mart General Stores in Eastgate Street, told me that he had lost hundreds of pounds, scores of customers and many friends during the period of glut. "Always on about prices—vituperative with it—until eggs came down to 2s. 3d. a dozen. 'Eggs, Mr. Corm,' they says, 'eggs! No, thank you! We don't eat eggs in our family, Mr. Corm, hardly touch 'em. I'll take half a dozen tins of crab.'"

BALLADE OF BURIAL

A CULTURE in disintegration, Wishing the future to construe With scholarly consideration What place in History is due To it, had best inter a few Objects that seem to show its very Essence, unsullied, clear and true. What can the Middle Classes bury,

With our complete annihilation Already roaring round us, to Be found by future excavation? Perhaps there'll be committees who Will list the items on pale blue Embossed and deckled stationery. This is a course we should eschew. What! Can the Middle Classes bury

No more than an agglomeration Of particles: a No. 2 Iron; a bowler; education Bills; *Salad Days*; a Waterloo Season; a London Season too; A pony; sixteen-shilling sherry? What simple single thing would do? What can the Middle Classes bury?

Highness (from whom we take our cue, Are loyally dowdy, chic, glum, merry), If now we cannot bury you What *can* the Middle Classes bury?

PETER DICKINSON

THE STATELY MANSIONS

By B. A. YOUNG

WELL, ladies and gentlemen, if you will kindly step this way—I'm afraid there isn't a lift; we were promised one by the landlords some years ago but they aren't making any improvements in this block until the Rent Act becomes law. However, the great front staircase is well worth looking at; there are fifty-eight stairs leading up to Number Fourteen, and they rise to a height of forty-six feet. The banisters are of hand-wrought iron with a handrail in mahogany veneer, and date from the first redecoration of the flats in 1927.

If you wouldn't mind just taking a ticket from my wife as you go in—thank you. The profits all go towards the housekeeping. One doesn't really like talking about such things, but in these days of crippling taxation and so on, there simply would be no way of keeping these lovely old flats going without opening them to the public. I'm glad to say the public is very appreciative of the great privilege they have in being able to see over them.

Now here we are in the hall. It's twelve feet long by five feet broad, and the ceiling, which you will see if you will just look up above your heads, is ten feet high. The hat-rack on your left can hold four full-sized hats and coats. It fell down once during a cocktail-party in 1932, but no damage was done, fortunately. The small picture that hangs on the other side shows pine-trees near Juan-les-Pins, and is by Sir Winston Churchill. It was cut out of an old number of the *Strand Magazine*.

Now if you will just follow me through this doorway.

This is the sitting-room. As you see, it is a very graciously-proportioned piece, eighteen feet by fifteen actually, and the windows command a truly magnificent view up and down Jacaranda Gardens, with its beautiful avenue of plane-trees. Unfortunately the trees have had to be cut back recently. The sitting-room was decorated originally by Messrs. Flanagan and Co. of Battersea in a style contemporary with the main fabric of the flat, but it suffered a good deal of damage during the war, when it housed three evacuees in addition to the family, and was extensively restored in 1949 by Cubbins and Crole of Doom

Park Avenue. The bookshelves on the east wall were added at that time.

There is an interesting story in connection with that sofa behind you. It comes from 23 Ramshaw Street, which was then the home of the Greens, my wife's family. It was in very bad condition when it was moved in here, and we decided to have it re-covered in uncut moquette, as you see it now. When the upholsterers were examining it, they found tucked down behind the seat a small lady's purse containing fourpence in coppers and a pair of nail-scissors. This was the purse that my wife's mother had lost twelve years previously, in 1913, and it had been there all that time. Wasn't that extraordinary?

Here is the main bedroom. I would like you to pay particular attention to the very remarkable patchwork quilt on the bed; this was worked by the girls

of the Lamp Green Young Conservatives and was presented to my wife on the occasion of her retirement after seven years as their president.

This door leads into the west bedroom, but I'm afraid it's not open to the public at present, as my grandson is doing his prep in it.

This is the bathroom. Yes, that is in a separate room.

Finally, I expect you would like to see into the kitchen. The kitchen was completely restored a few years ago after an accident with a pressure-cooker and I'm afraid it no longer has much historic interest, but you may be interested to see the bread-slicing machine and the great chromium teaturn that we installed soon after the flat was first opened to the public. Well, yes, madam, we *do do* teas, three-and-sixpence a head, jam sixpence extra.

Thank you, thank you very much.

1897

UP FOR THE CATTLE SHOW.



Old Style of Farmer.
"AYE, I BE GOING TO THE SHOW, THEN ON TO THE WAX-WORKS, AND WIND UP AT THE ADELPHI."

New Style of Farmer.
"NOW, LET ME SEE, MUST HAVE A LOOK AT THE PICTURE SHOWS IN BOND STREET, CALL ON TAILOR, GET THE LATEST NECKTIE IN BURLINGTON ARCADE, LOOK IN AT THE EMPIRE. CATTLE SHOW? NEVER GO NEAR SUCH A PLACE!"

1917



"WELL UPON MY WORD! AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE I HAD TO GET A QUARTER OF A POUND OF BUTTER, THE COOK'S SENT UP MARGARINE. I SHOULD HATE THE MAIDS TO GO SHORT, BUT I DO THINK WE OUGHT TO SHARE THINGS."

FORSYTES UP TO DATE

By ALEX ATKINSON

IT was not alone the fact that Soames had entrenched himself cosily behind a corner in Dufys which served to alienate him from the rest of the family; a shrewd market manœuvre of that kind each Forsyte in his heart was more than ready to applaud. As James put it—poor James, composing his pitiful letters to the *Daily Mirror* about the meagreness of his old-age pension!—as James put it, an eye to the main chance was undoubtedly one thing; but then to leave the firm, to abandon the upper middle-class and take over a chain of hot-dog emporiums equipped with juke-boxes was, demonstrably, quite another. A five hundred per cent profit on fried-egg sandwiches might look admirable enough on a balance-sheet—but to drive a vulgar cream convertible around the vicinity of Tottenham Court Road must surely be enough to set old "Superior Dosset" Forsyte whirling in his grave!

In fact, of course, Soames, far from

cutting himself off from the upper middle-class, had on the contrary edged his way firmly *into* it. But to the main body—the solid, whimpering phalanx of the Forsytes—such an analysis of the situation would have been unthinkable!

Anyone privileged to be present on that evening in June, 1957, in old Jolyon's tall, musty apartment in Pimlico, when the Forsytes gathered to celebrate June's forthcoming engagement to young Bosinney, would have been vouchsafed a glimpse of the sturdy backbone of England shortly before it groaned, cracked, splintered under the strain of making ends not quite meet! Outside, in the soft, shimmering light of evening, all the lovers in London were making their way on murmurous crêpe soles down to the Embankment, while the shadows imperceptibly lengthened by becoming a little longer, and Time itself flew by with a rustle of plastic wings.

But inside all was snug. Jolyon had

put a shilling in the gas, the landlady had lent three extra chairs, and the company was assembled, in all its Forsyte finery. June herself—dear June, with ink still on her fingers from that horrid office!—was fresh and charming in last year's print frock, with a suède rose at her little bosom and a ten-shilling perm in her hair. Her grandfather, old Jolyon, had got the tea-stains out of his moustache with a new detergent; he contrived to be impeccable in old tennis shoes—to ease his corns!—and a hacking jacket Soames had sold him for a guinea. James was in his solicitor's uniform—shiny dark grey suit, patched shirt, and down-at-heel golf shoes stained black. Swithin and Roger were resplendent in hairy sports jackets and crumpled thin flannels. The dapper Nicholas had surprised everyone by arriving in a new suit, which he eventually admitted—after submitting to the customary Forsyte family interrogation ("Nice stuff. Is it stolen?") "Good God! Have

you sold the telly?”)—to having obtained on the instalment plan! Timothy did not appear at all: he was generally believed to be bed-ridden in his quaint single room in Kentish Town, studying his stocks and shares under the blanket and gibbering.

The old ladies discussed the current prices of vegetables, each one secretly awaiting an opportunity to purloin, from a dish on the sideboard, a coupon entitling the bearer to purchase two packets of cake-mix for the price of one and a half. But dear little June—capable housekeeper that she was, and ever watchful of her grandpa's interests!—dear little June had her eye on them all the time.

That is, when her eye was not upon her lover.

Bosinney, characteristically, was sprawled at ease in the only comfortable chair. He had taken Soames' wife Irene on to his knee, and was caressing her exquisite form in a manner so familiar that from time to time more than one Forsyte eyebrow was raised in mild curiosity. And when he pressed his lips to hers, during a general discussion on the inadvisability of emigrating to Canada after the age of sixty, suspicion undoubtedly began to grow in several Forsyte breasts that a friendship seemed likely to spring up between Irene and this handsome young crooner if ever they chanced to go away for a week-end together. June laughed gaily at their amorous antics. Soames—he had come straight from Highgate Cemetery, where he had been trying to calculate how much he might get for the family vault—leaned against the mantelpiece and sneered at Jolyon's threadbare table-cloth.

The elder Forsytes were in a state of concealed high excitement at the possibility of a member of the clan actually marrying into the crooner class. Bosinney's discs were selling five hundred thousand a time; panties bearing his embroidered signature were



retailing at two guineas, with a five per cent cut for Bosinney! If only little June could land a fish of this magnitude, who could tell what vast changes might not be wrought on the Forsyte fortunes? Sensible boots for old Jolyon—a holiday for poor Aunt Hester—there seemed no end to the benefits that might accrue!

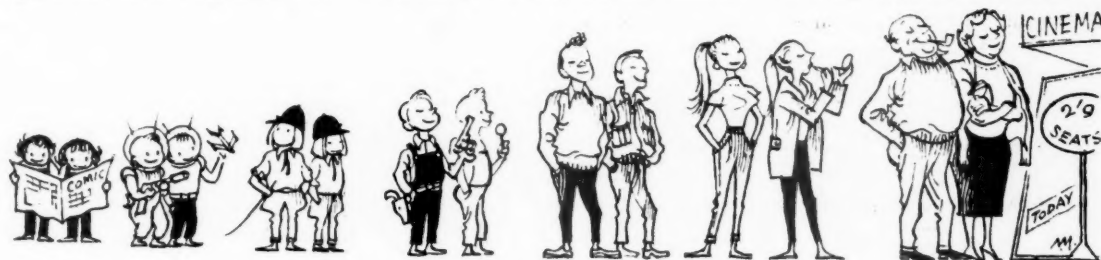
Hence the sumptuousness of the feast to which the assembly presently sat down—a more than usually typical Forsyte spread! Oh, that traditional Forsyte stew! The very breath of England rose in thin nauseous steam from the chipped casserole as June set it down on the cork mat beside the bottle of sauce! How bright the carrot slices shone, singing for very joy of England's might! How strong the onions reeked! How far-flung lurked the peas! The very heart of solid, respectable, cowed, hopeless middle-

class England beat to the rhythm of the chunks of real meat as they sloshed and bumped against the earthenware! And mash! And cheese! And biscuits!

Bosinney ate but little. He had already made up his mind that an alliance with poor little June was out of the question. Nothing less than a titled lady for a man in his position! Or even—dare he think it?—a fashion model! A man of property must stick to his class!

Meanwhile, this Irene dame was interesting.

And outside, the fiery sun sank ever lower to the Thames, beckoning the dusk to cloak the lovers pressing close in park and bombed site, beckoning the night to hide the weeping face of an England grown too small and worn and woebegone for even the blessed Forsytes to be able to squeeze any more out of her.



It's in the Negative...

By JAMES INSIGHT



THE correspondence columns of the Church press rarely let themselves go, preferring something in the nature of *Onward from Chalcedon* or *Was Arius a Deist?* to anything ribald on the position of one's deceased wife's sister or what to do with the next Jehovah's Witness who knocks at your vicarage door. Second-hand eagles and portable altars can be picked up quite cheaply if you wait long enough.

Not long ago a stimulating controversy was being carried out as to whether photographers are to be allowed inside churches for weddings. An order issued in one diocese that permission for such must be sought from the Rural Dean and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances was not too well received. Clergy were expressing their disapproval of such sanctions against photographers. This, they said, may be the only record many brides will possess until they next appear in church, and then everyone will be far too unhappy to think about photographs.

Anglican vicars (unlike their Free Church brethren) take a vow that they will obey their bishops without question. A good deal of print is therefore being used up in making it quite clear why some have no intention of carrying out the order.

However, many will obey, and one foresees that the spring rush of weddings is going to cause hardship; photographers crossing the county border in desperate search of churches where there is no such ban. What too of the position of those clergymen in neighbouring counties who receive into their churches photographers who are not *persona grata*

in the prohibited area? Are there to be reprisals against them in future years should they accept a living in the diocese concerned?

On the whole clergy find church photographers reasonable. Such men, they say, expect little more than eight to ten pounds out of a wedding, and if tackled about the religious angle normally reply simply but with fervour, "What about the Coronation?" adding that those vicars who insist on gym shoes and put the pulpit out of bounds will not find them unreasonable. It is doubtful, say the photographers, if the general public realize how much they have to put up with; not the least being the pernicious custom by which the bridal couple give the picture rights to amateur friends and relatives in return for cut-rate prices.

There will of course always be those parsons on whom the sight of a church photographer has much the same effect as red underwear on a bull, and they will rush at the wretched man, doing their best to damage him with his own tripod, forcing him to wait beyond the graveyard wall. But most of us demand of those photographers we allow to enter our churches only a certain decorum in dress and behaviour; ties to be worn, no more than fifty pounds of photographic equipment permitted at any one time inside the building, non-squeak shoes, no flicking of the fingers, speed not to exceed one mile per hour.

Myself I find that where friction does occur it is normally due to over-eagerness on the part of the photographer. In the middle of the first wedding I ever took I was unsettled by





a small man creeping on all fours through the choir stalls. Uncertain as to whether he was a guest who, having arrived late at the wrong end of the church, wished to effect a quiet entry, or merely a disappointed suitor, I held my hand. However, when at the words "With this ring I thee wed . . ." he raised a telescopic lens, it was only by exercising restraint and stepping quickly to the left that I enabled him to obtain a fine close up of a white silk hood (M.A. Cantab.)

It may, however, be that we are witnessing the swan song of the church photographer, since services are tending to become more and more mechanical; records replace bells; oil-firing and vacuum-cleaners threaten the livelihood of vergers; even the vicar, should he feel indisposed, wired for sound to the pulpit, delivering his sermon propped against the pillows with microphone, Bible and lozenges.

Is it too fanciful to believe that we may yet live to see a mechanical hoist for the font; collections delivered personally on wires, as in old-fashioned shops, small wooden cups propelled from the pews; and built-in cameras recording each wedding automatically, results delivered quickly to the guests racing outside to secure the best rice-flinging positions?

The Pioneers

"Messrs. Ramsbottom, Swaine and Murgatroyd proceeded to erect a mill in the Holme. The inhabitants . . . would have liked to prevent them. The mill was, however, completed in 1800."—*From an article on smoke abatement by the chairman of Bradford Civic Society's Amenities Committee*

THERE'll always be a Bradford;
There mightn't have been, unless
(Ignoring residents' protests
Against their ruthlessness)
Had come, to fill the industrial void,
Ramsbottom, Swaine and Murgatroyd.

There might have been no Priestley
(In Bradford's view, a pity),
Neither a civic theatre nor
An amenities committee:
As luxuries outsiders class
All three—but where there's muck, there's brass.

Now Aire is foul and smoky
And Holme is far from sweet;
But where there's brass there's muck—and so
The cycle is complete
With Bradford folk once more annoyed
At Ramsbottom, Swaine and Murgatroyd.

ANTHONY BRODE

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT

MR. MACMILLAN was not born yesterday. There is an astute calculation in his every act of exuberant bonhomie, and it is not for nothing that he has developed the pleasing affectation of speaking of "m' right honourable friend," as if all Members of Parliament were Eton Housemasters. Had it been for nothing we can be sure that Mr. Nabarro would not have imitated him. It was a curious crisis. The Opposition entirely agreed with the Government's latest move over Suez. Yet it wanted a debate—not because it itself had anything new to say but because it wanted to embarrass the Conservatives by exposing their antagonisms in the division lobby. So the Opposition put down a motion of censure of the Government's past policy. Few people indeed by now dispute that the confusions of last October were so incredible that it is only reasonable to assume that our affairs were somehow under the dominance of poltergeists rather than of politicians. Yet all that has by now been said so often that no one is the least interested in hearing it said again. The result was that the

arguments from the Socialist Front Bench—Mr. Gaitskell, Mr. Younger, and finally Mr. Bevan—were sometimes true but always unendurably boring. Mr. Bevan in particular, floundering between quotations from Shakespeare and Bulgandin, and stammering embarrassingly, had a failure so great that he must have wished that he had stayed behind in India. Even listening to Nehru could not have been quite as bad as that. "All over the world," he cried, touching the ultimates of bathos, "people were asking: When are we going to have a general election in England?"

Are they clinging to their crosses,
Nye, O Nye,
Where the Breton boat-fleet tosses,
Are they, Nye?
Do they fasting, trembling, bleeding,
Wait the news from this our city?
Groaning "That's the Second
Reading."
Hissing "There is still Committee."
If the voice of Gaitskell falters,
If Macmillan's shafts get by,
Do they tremble for their altars?
Do they, Nye?

I fancy that Mr. Macmillan knows as



well as anyone that it is impossible to make sense of what happened last October. Therefore he left that task to the unhappy Mr. Selwyn Lloyd and with a genial yelp or two and a "let bygones be bygones" he faced the future, talked of tankers and pipe-lines and docking facilities at Milford Haven. It was all right. It was, indeed, even in a way magnificent, but it was not the debate, and knowing critics were heard to be confiding in one another that the old boy was not happy. They forgot that there was a second innings.

Mr. Macmillan had noticed that Mr. Bevan and Mr. Gaitskell had taken diametrically opposite views of the Eisenhower Plan—Mr. Bevan to condemn it and Mr. Gaitskell to commend. He kept this up his sleeve for the witching hour of half-past nine when Knockabout Time comes in, and in a twinkle the Opposition's attack on the Government was transformed into the Government's exposure of the Opposition. It would not have been too difficult anyway, and it was made doubly easy by the kindness of Mr. Stokes, who countered Mr. Bevan's plea that the withdrawal of the Aswan Dam credits was a cause of Nasser's aggression by the comment that the Aswan Dam



was a ridiculous project anyway. It was a triumph for the Prime Minister alike over opponents, colleagues and rebels, and when the figures were announced the Conservative Members rose and cheered him to the echo.

Yet it is not all quite as easy as that. "Do I understand," Mr. Grimond had asked in the week's best crack at question-time on Tuesday, "that the Government are now following the Socialist policy in this as in everything else?" Of course they are—on Suez as on the printing of ration books, but the question is whether there is anything else that they could do. The question of the censure debate was not really whether the Socialists would find anything to say—everyone knew the answer to that one—but whether the Tory rebels would be able to offer a coherent policy in alternative to that of the Government—whether their revolt was a serious affair or not.

There have been so many examples in both parties of Members who have refused or have been refused the whip and then after a few months in a highly theoretical wilderness have come back to the fold obediently and long before the election. A mere repetition of such a manoeuvre would be almost ridiculous. Yet there are a good many signs that these boats are not for burning. A Conservative rebel to the right has one great advantage and one great disadvantage. His disadvantage is that he has no other place to go. His advantage is that most of the party workers in his constituency are on his side—just as

most of the Socialist workers are Bevanite. But he must have something to say, and that was the obstinate question of this debate: "Could the rebels explain what else the Government should do?"

They did not make too good a show. Lord Hinchinbrooke is like Voltaire's God. If he did not exist it would be necessary to invent him. Everybody likes him—in which alone perhaps he does not resemble Voltaire's God—everybody respects him, but nobody takes him quite seriously. Yet he speaks for a considerable section of the British public and it would have been a travesty of democracy if any party chicanery had prevented him from having his say. Yet it cannot be pretended that he did give a very coherent answer. He praised "gunboat diplomacy," but it was far from clear what he would have done with the gunboat even if he had had it. Captain Waterhouse would "hunt Nasser like a rat." Sir Victor Raikes objected to policy being under the control of Americans who "had stabbed us in the back." How infinite is the debt owed to metaphors by politicians who want to speak strongly but are not sure what they are going to say!

By far the best of the rebel speeches was that of Mr. Angus Maude. He condemned the policy in a restrained and dignified speech. He prophesied that, true to dictator's form, it was only too probable that Colonel Nasser would commit further acts of aggression in the near future, and complained that the

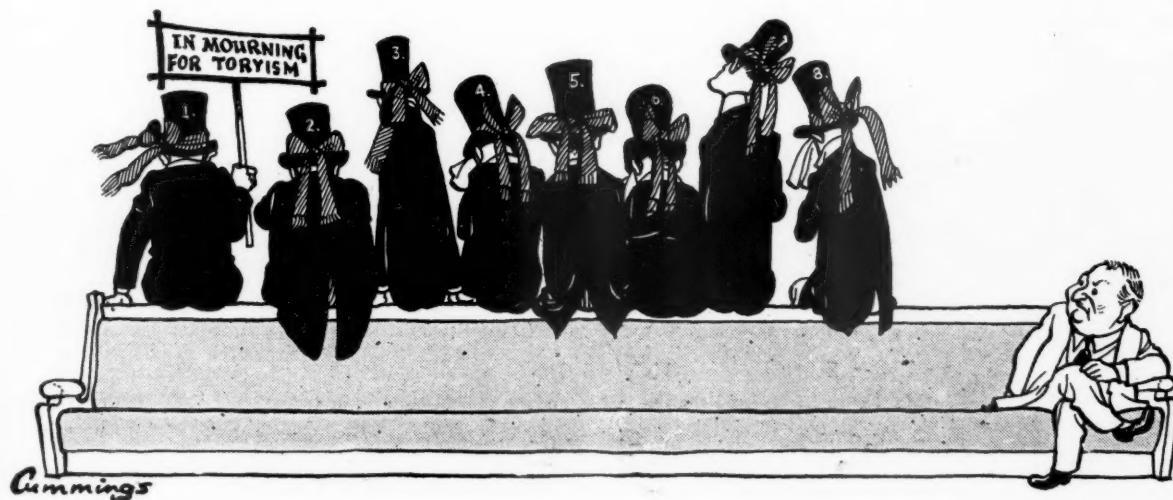
Prime Minister had given no indication with what policy it was proposed to meet such future aggression. But I think that it could fairly be claimed that he gave little indication of the policy with which he would meet it himself—for subsidizing tankers for going round the Cape out of Egyptian sterling balances is hardly a policy.

Yet Mr. Maude raised a very pertinent point. For he is certainly right that the Prime Minister in his first speech had given no indication of the policy towards future aggression, and in his second speech he did not even refer to such criticisms. Are the Government going to be caught unprepared as so often in the past by a move that everyone in the world except the Government has foreseen?

The best—if almost the shortest—speech of the debate on Wednesday came from Major Sharples. He alone really faced these questions. On Thursday Mr. Grimond paid him the compliment of substantially repeating this speech. Indeed, there was no difference whatsoever between these two excellent speeches except that one was apparently in favour of the motion and the other against it, since at the end the two speakers of them went into opposite division lobbies.

Throughout all these stirring times the Lords were engaged in accepting an amendment to the Shops Bill by which it will now be legal to sell guide-books in open spaces within the meaning of the Open Spaces Act. Thus freedom lives.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

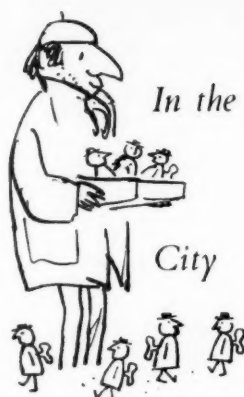




EMPIRE DAY

(Mr. Nehru has ordered the removal of statues of British rulers in India.)

*ERE the cords of the Commonwealth sunder, keep the forces of rupture in check,
 Give heed to the remnants about ye, and save what ye can from the wreck.
 Remove not the ancient landmark; though ye deem it a token of shame
 It may yet contain something of value; ye may find a use for the same.*



With Strings

THE queues at the wage claims office are endless: as soon as the union in front has made its bid and counted its booty it makes straight for the tail. The image of our old enemy the vicious spiral is complete if we think of organized labour careering madly round the Inner Circle and getting nowhere fast. This it seems is the end of creeping inflation, the beginning of galloping inflation.

As the speed increases opportunities for finesse in bargaining become fewer. There is no time for shilly-shally and argy-bargy: the claim is staked in language of uncompromising bluntness, and no attempt is now made to hide the "unmentionables" of industrial relations under a blanket of euphemistic verbiage. Eleven shillings a week with strings—eight shillings without.

So restrictive practices have at last been admitted, brought out into the open; and now they are to be used as king chequers in the big league games. Before long we shall have wage claims phrased like this—"The union demands the statutory seasonal 5 per cent, plus six per cent inflationary bonus, plus three per cent as consideration in respect of an undertaking by the union not to increase its restrictive practices until August. If the Employers' Association agrees forthwith to limit dividends to 5 per cent, campaign enthusiastically for a capital gains tax, abandon identical tenders, automation and price agreements considered in restraint of trade, then the union is prepared to cut its demand for an inflationary bonus to 4½ per cent." And the Association will no doubt reply in terms of comparable truculence—"In accordance with the standstill agreement of September last the Association rejects all the union demands. It is prepared, however, to grant a once-for-all pay increase of 2 per cent on the understanding that

restrictive practices are cut by 25 per cent, that absenteeism is reduced by 12½ per cent, and that all employees sign a written undertaking that as soon as the European Common Market scheme becomes operable they will buy only the products of members of the Association."

On June 3 a claim for a substantial wage increase will be submitted on behalf of 600,000 farm workers. (Last rise of 6s. a week granted in August.) One million building workers are claiming an additional 5s. 6d. per week. Cocoa workers get 7s. 6d. a week more from April 22. Busmen (100,000 of them) are demanding another half-crown to go with the 5s. a week they got last November. Workers in drugs and chemicals are to get an extra 8s. a week. Twenty thousand cement workers have been awarded a wage increase of 2½d. an



Traveller from an Antique Land

HOW old is an antique? That is the question which everybody is now asking in the West Country. Only ten years ago farmhouses and cottages were emporiums of junk, but among the clutter was the odd piece of Chelsea china, a pair of Staffordshire dogs and perhaps a piece of Georgian silver or Chippendale. Some of us with an aversion to spring-cleaning or who lived at a considerable distance from a pawnshop could do even better than that: we still had a tattered Elizabethan curtain in the drawing-room or a small Gainsborough which we had hung to hide a damp patch on the wall of a bedroom. Such forgotten treasures which none of us valued used to come to light when we moved from the county or from the world. An auction on the property would give opportunities to our neighbours. To their junk they would add our clutter.

But the dealers soon located this mine.

hour. Miners will get up to 13s. a week more.

What next? Well, the first sure sign of galloping inflation is that people find money too hot to hold. Cash in hand and at the bank loses another few per cent of its value every time it is looked at, so the more thoughtful types convert it into goods, property, shares, gold, pictures and trinkets while the converting is still good. There are numerous signs that the flight from money has already begun.

There are also signs—among certain union leaders and in the information leaking from Mr. Macmillan's house parties—that the need for really strong holding action is at last understood. The danger now is that the three riders—the Government, the unions and the associations—are galloping too fast to be pulled up on the brink.

MAMMON

They began to attend farm sales themselves, and indeed for the last few years it has been their practice to call at the door before the undertaker. As they were quick to point out to relatives, any articles sold before death need not be declared in probate for duty. Many a dying man has realized he had little hope of survival once he heard his wife downstairs burrowing in a cupboard for his grandfather's candlesticks.

For a time the antique shops in the market towns did a thriving business passing on the best of their finds to London dealers who used to make regular tours round the West Country. But their harvest was brief. It lasted only about five years. Now the local antique shops are all more or less empty. Some have taken up side-lines, selling mementoes or gifts or turning themselves into cafés. The antique dealers are now running round our farms as distracted as rabbits. One called on me last week; he asked if I had any Victoriana. He knew he had no hope of finding any article of an earlier date than that because he had already bought it and sold it.

I wonder how long I have to wait before I can cash in on my pre-war vacuum cleaner or the crystal set complete with earphones which I am storing in the box-room? At the present speed with which the past has caught up with us and the future has extended itself away from us we have good prospects. I am hoping that now we can get anything on hire-purchase they will be considered antiques by the time they are paid for.

RONALD DUNCAN



CRITICISM



BOOKING OFFICE

Harris, George and J.

Three Men in a Boat and Three Men on the Bummel. Jerome K. Jerome. Everyman, 8/6

"SLOWLY the golden memory of the dead sun fades from the hearts of the cold, sad clouds. Silent, like sorrowing children, the birds have ceased their song, and only the moorhen's plaintive cry and the harsh croak of the cornrake stirs the awed hush around the couch of the waters, where the dying day breathes out her last . . . and Night, upon her sombre throne, folds her black wings above the darkened world, and from her phantom palace, lit by the pale stars, reigns in stillness."

It is always difficult to get away from the writers of one's own youth. *Three Men in a Boat* first appeared in 1889, the year Jerome was thirty; *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in 1873. The passage quoted above shows how a Fourth Man—Walter Pater—managed to get into the boat, on and off, for some of the trip. He kept fairly quiet on the whole, unnoticed by the other three, and his place was sometimes taken by another extraneous figure (perhaps the author's father, a lay preacher), who will suddenly sermonize with violence, as in the extraordinary incident where they find the corpse of a woman floating down stream.

All the same, it is a remarkable book. The sales in England exceeded a million and a half; while over a million were pirated in America. Translations appeared in every known tongue, Russia finding this jaunty up the Thames particularly sympathetic. That is easy to understand. Harris (who was, incidentally, a Pole) lost in the maze at Hampton Court, could easily be transferred to Chekhov; while the episode of the Cheese could be well imagined in Gogol.

The Cheese remains intensely funny. When I read the book as a child I thought "the black gentleman" was a coloured visitor to this country, but I

find that he was, in fact, an undertaker. There seems a possibility that A. Frederics (whose original illustrations are, happily, here included) was under the same misapprehension. It is true that an undertaker-like figure is also shown among the passengers in the railway carriage, but he seems to be feeling the disturbing effects of the Cheese; while the only complacent traveller—apart from the author himself



—is a bowler-hatted person of decidedly negroid cast of countenance.

Some of the other famous passages no longer made me laugh—though still overwhelming in their effect on the young. The aspect of the book that remains most impressive is the way in which the discursive method of narrative, comparable with *Tristram Shandy*, is throughout successfully maintained. That this is a matter of skill, and not chance, may be seen from *Three Men on the Bummel* (illustrations by Raven Hill), written a dozen years later, which has become—so it seemed to me—ponderous and dated. It is not surprising that *On the Bummel* was popular in Germany, as it is full of praise for the quiet domestic virtues of the Germans.

Jerome K. Jerome (1859-1927), after a hardish start in life, made a successful

career as a writer. His middle name, "Klapka," was given (so Mr. D. C. Browning informs us in his introduction) after a Hungarian general who was a friend of the family. In the home, he was usually called "Luther," to prevent confusion with his father, Jerome Clapp Jerome. One gets the impression of an unusual family background.

Like other books of about that period—*Trilby*, for example—there is a sense of contrasting the pleasures of male companionship and rough fun with the boredom of having to be bothered with women. In *On the Bummel*, Harris and the author are married, and the book opens with some account of the sex-war, approached without much subtlety or perception.

The individual psychology of George and Harris is hard to disentangle (cf. *Trilby*, Taffy and the Laird), but in general it may be said that Harris appears to have been the more extraverted of the two, always inclined to heartiness and practical jokes, while George liked philosophizing and had musical leanings that caused him to buy a banjo, though never to learn to play that instrument.

There can be no doubt melancholy broods over the high spirits of *Three Men in a Boat*, even apart from the consciously sombre passages. Some found the book vulgar; and at times it certainly possesses a rich, unselfconscious absence of any attempt at social pretension for which one can find nothing but praise. The style brings back the epoch in a very different manner, but with the same pungency as Sherlock Holmes. It is unquestionably a classic.

ANTHONY POWELL

A Hard Life

The Only Child. James Kirkup, Collins, 13/6

This is what it was like, this is what it must have been like, to be born into poverty in South Shields. Here are the hardships of working-class life and the festivals. Mr. Kirkup remembers street

songs and folklore and dialect and eccentrics and the smell of the river and the smell of the sea, and he builds his book round his grateful, affectionate and admiring picture of his parents.

His memory goes further back than most people's. He can describe the years two to five convincingly. Although he was a silent, timid child who had occasional bouts of exhibitionism, behind whatever appearance he was presenting he burned with a passion to experience and understand. Mr. Kirkup is a poet, which means that as a child his sense-impressions were precise and his awareness never flagged, not that he was dreamily escapist. His autobiography is magnificently concrete. He rarely comments and he rarely writes a sentence without a detail.

R. G. G. P.

Enigmas of History. Hugh Ross Williamson. *Michael Joseph*, 18/-

Not for the first time High Tables will grow pink at Mr. Ross Williamson's distrust of "scientific" historians. As a literary detective, snorting at tradition, he puts forward in these essays his original deductions from seven classic cases. His weakest claim seems to be that Elizabeth I may well have been the daughter of Mark Smeaton, a court musician executed for adultery with Anne Boleyn; Smeaton pleaded guilty, but to suppose that Elizabeth inherited from him her love of the virginals is surely to forget Henry VIII's considerable skill in music.

Perhaps the neatest theory here, elaborated from a suggestion by Lord Quickwood, is that the Man in the Iron Mask (in fact, black velvet) was Louis XIV's father, a valet. Mr. Ross Williamson's other question-marks refer to George IV's Queen, the poisoning of James I, Charles I's executioner, Sir John Fenwick's guilt, and the diamond necklace which Marie Antoinette refused to buy. Most of his arguments are at least plausible, and all are entertaining.

E. O. D. K.

The Fountain of the Sun. Douglas Busk. *Parrish*, 35/-

A British ambassador to Ethiopia determined to go mountain-climbing may find himself making the assault on lonely peaks with a retinue of scores of galloping horsemen, while his wife, coming along to illustrate the adventure, finds police officers, constables and orderlies prepared to guard the official easel. There is continuous piquancy added to this otherwise pedestrian narrative by the colourful element of surprise inherent in this large, friendly and exciting land of thirty different languages where the years are named after the four evangelists in succession—St. Luke gets leap-year—where the children simply do not go in for toys or games and where Pontius Pilate is held in reverence.

When Mr. Busk passes to his climbs in the Ruwenzori country, including the first ascent of the previously unnamed

Mount Elizabeth, he is in unequal competition with Himalayan exploits, but he continues to score heavily on oddities, best of all in this land of giant groundsel and other freak vegetation, where the beam of St. John's Wort is used to strengthen the climbers' hut.

C. C. P.

The Art of the Dramatist. J. B. Priestley. *Heinemann*, 10/6

To recognize the dramatist's technical problems and study his skill in overcoming them may seem unimportant to the ordinary playgoer. But for those who are not ordinary playgoers (and which of us is? We only sit next to them) Mr. Priestley's lecture to the Vic-Wells Association, with an Appendix of elaborations to questions asked, promises theatrical enjoyment on a separate plane, yet not necessarily distracting from the play itself. Indeed, one of his many lively and persuasive theories is that the audience must be aware that the play is a play; once they are so carried away with its "reality" that they forget that they are in a theatre an indispensable element of dramatic experience is missing. It is all clear, simple, straightforward stuff, compactly argued, inventive and often witty in example, and—if irrelevantly—an object lesson in how to project opinions and exhibit intelligence without a hint of patronage or self-satisfaction.

J. B. B.

Baron. Baron. *Muller*, 21/-

These posthumously published memoirs are the lightest of journalism, a naïve record of financial success, eminent sitters and yachts and casinos and night-clubs. Like others of the more articulate friends of the Royal Family he makes one feel slightly sorry for them. The terrible injuries that Baron survived and the difficulties in building up his business that he overcame are mentioned almost casually, almost as if they were merely additions to the interest of life. His ebullient, go-getting personality, his lack of any intellectual interests and his uncritical enthusiasms leave him an oddly attractive autobiographer. One feels that, though life has a good deal in it that Baron missed, his zest was a good thing in itself.

Peter Ustinov's introduction, though far too well written to make a fair opening to the book, explains something of what the eminent saw in Baron. There was more to him than he let into a book which was obviously aimed at the large television public he built up with his series on photography.

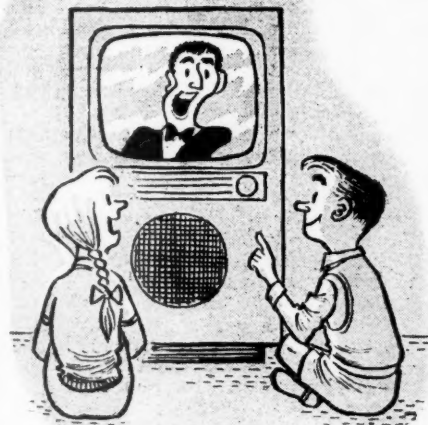
R. G. G. P.



AT THE OPERA

Lucia di Lammermoor and
La Bohème (STOLL)

AGAIN there is a prompt who stands in a sort of punch-and-judy booth with his chin in the footlights. In front of him shines a little convex mirror,



—Brockbank

“—Hæcker Hunter.”

so rigged that he and the conductor (behind) can see what each other is up to. The lobby five minutes before the start darkly glitters with Italian colony.

In short, the reprieved Stoll has been taken for a month by one of those *ad hoc* Italian opera companies. The externals are much as before. I am happy to report, however, that the less it changes the more different *ad hoc* Italian opera is apt to become.

The main mote, beam, stumbling block at the Stoll used to be the orchestra. I remember Tito Gobbi coming away from a *Rigoletto* rehearsal with amusement written in all his dimples. Many of the fiddlers, he said, had never set foot in an opera house before and were in the habit of standing up, fiddle under chin, scraping the while, to see what was happening on the stage.

Those days seem over. For *Lucia Vincenzo Bellezza*, a maestro of proved parts (he once had charge of the Italian seasons at Covent Garden), brought the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra into the pit and showed us what a finely-chased, golden thing Donizetti's scoring is in the right hands. In *Bohème*, conducted by Manno Wolf-Ferrari, another historic name in Italian music, we heard an alternate orchestra, the London Symphony, a mark or two below the R.P.O. in some ways but still sweeter and smoother (despite Mr. Ferrari's overbrisk speeds here and there) than Stollgoers had ever hoped or dreamed.

Lucia sent the house off its head. It had not been seen here for over thirty years. The only thing that kept it feebly alive in our hearts during the interim was the sextet tune, Act Two. This is the one which, in the old *Scarface* film, Paul Muni's shadow always whistled

before bumping off another rival gangster. Many of us now heard it for the first time in its true setting, a Walter Scott baronial hall, where, in deference to the Scottish milieu, tartan forage caps were worn with puce doublets and beige silk stockings. As soon as the sextet was over everybody whistled, stamped and gyrated with delight for minutes on end. Then we had it all over again.

This is the kind of thing which always ought to happen as a matter of course—and to the devil with prissy good taste—whenever one of these magnificent old operatic “machines” is sung as sizeably and stimulatingly as Virginia Zeani (Lucia), Enzo Sordello, Lorenzo Gaetani and, in rather lesser degree, Giacinto Prandelli, the tenor, are singing this one. Miss Zeani's tone is often thrillingly good, and there is plenty of it. In the stiffer *fioriture* she copes rather than conquers outright, but you can't have everything.

Bohème brought up an affecting, pure-toned Mimi (Ranata Scotti), a richly stentorian Marcello (Ezio Achilli) and a Musetta (Ondina Otta) who keeps a melodious voice well in hand. To shut the Christmas Eve cold out of the Café Momus, the designer had built a wall down the middle of the stage, thus cutting it off from the street. The free intermingling of crowd and *consommateurs* which, climate or no climate, Giacosa, Illica and Puccini intended, was thus quite foxed.

CHARLES REID



The Old Woman—JOAN PLOWRIGHT



The Old Man—GEORGE DEVINE

AT THE PLAY



The Chairs—The Apollo de Bellac
(ROYAL COURT)
The Telescope (GUILDFORD)

OF the two one-act plays from the French now at the Royal Court, the more interesting is Eugene Ionesco's *The Chairs*, translated by Donald Watson. For several years Ionesco has been the darling of the art theatres of Paris; this is the first of his deceptively eccentric plays to reach the public stage in London. He would be caviar, snails, and bird's-nest soup to the general, but *The Chairs* catches him at his most easily digestible. His allegiance is to the fashionable school of despair; his method of calculated inconsequence is his own. On the surface he can be very funny, while under his surrealist antics he tells us in all seriousness that as human beings we are alone and defenceless, unable even to communicate with one another.

His characters here are an old couple, devotedly married for sixty years. In senility they buttress their sense of failure with the snippet chitchat of the nursery, the old woman imagining her husband the great man he becomes in dreams. So that he can propound through a hired orator his grand plan for the reformation of the world, they give a party for all those who have touched their lives; as these arrive, invisible, they are given golden chairs and held in polite conversation. Even the Emperor turns up. Having crammed the stage

with chairs, and set the scene for its climax, the wheezing hosts leap through the window to their deaths, and the orator appears, dumb and grunting.

In a curious way the play strikes sparks in the mind, but like all Ionesco's work it goes on too long. Nearly everything that matters is said in the opening, where the old couple talk together and then make heavy weather of their first guests; after that things become a drawn-out farcical scramble. A heavy strain is put on the actors, but Joan Plowright and George Devine sink themselves successfully in second childhood. Miss Plowright's crazy sprightliness is terrible and touching.

Jean Giraudoux can be a master of the kind of romantic fantasy in which sentiment is saved from sentimentality, but *The Apollo de Bellac* (wouldn't "of" have been better?), translated by Ronald Duncan, grows pretty thin. It starts well, with a girl trying to make her way in the world being taught by a handsome stranger that she can lay all men at her feet simply by telling them they are beautiful. Her first attempt, on a grotesque old porter, is charming, but we have to go through a whole series of experiments which end with a diamond ring and the mysterious evaporation of her tutor. But to be a little bored by Giraudoux is by no means to be bored by Heather Sears, who plays the girl so naturally and with such a welcome absence of tricks that I found myself casting her confidently for much bigger parts. Richard Pasco is admirable, investing the stranger with a gentle superiority, but apart from John Osborne's porter the others all have their feet too firmly on conventionally comic ground.

In its own theatre, but about to embark on a useful quadrangular swap with Hornchurch, Canterbury and Salisbury, the Guildford Repertory made an honest job of the first production of R. C. Sherriff's new play, *The Telescope*. This has been adapted by its author from his radio version, and in its long duologues it still bears marks of this origin. Although unfolding slowly it has a core of intelligent discussion of a current problem: the difficulties of a slum parish made pagan not by poverty but inherited bitterness. Mr. Sherriff treats them fairly unsentimentally. In a desperate uphill start his new vicar finds hope in the case of a tragic boy, driven into crime by a frightful home, whom gradually he brings back to life. Eager to join a training ship where he has been placed, the boy steals again, and the vicar is shattered. I felt his perspective was a little askew, for the success of his boys' club should have meant more.

Mr. Sherriff writes so carefully that I hesitate to question his accuracy, but I did wonder if such an innocent as this vicar would be let loose nowadays on such a tough parish, with no organization

to help him, and also if such a parish could still be dominated by a doddering Victorian spinster fighting to keep the church as her select preserve. In this play the men are better drawn than the women; the boy wonderfully. It would have been easy to make him a spiv; he is studied more subtly, and in Bryan Bailey's production he was given brilliant sensitivity by Melvyn Hayes. Edward Woodward as the vicar, Hilary Liddell as his wife, and Raymond Mason as a practical old cockney filled in a solid background.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Summer of the Seventeenth Doll (New—8/5/57), Australian vitality. *Zuleika* (Saville—24/4/57), very nearly Dobson. *Plaintiff in a Pretty Hat* (St. Martin's—24/10/56), sparkling light comedy.

ERIC KEOWN



AT THE PICTURES

The Steel Bayonet
Boy on a Dolphin

MORE than once a good war film has been a simple, severe story of an isolated episode concerning a small body of men most or all of whom are dead at the end of it. One remembers, after all these years, *The Lost Patrol*. It is perhaps an obvious formula, even (it may be) easier than any other to produce a pretty good film from; but never mind. As regular readers will know, I don't believe in second-thoughts criticism; if a thing is good and satisfying at the time, admit this and praise it, and don't allow later reflection about its obvious simplicity or the fact that it wasn't "committed" to stating any important truth to make you decide you couldn't have enjoyed it after all.

A new good film on the theme is called *The Steel Bayonet* (Director: Michael Carreras)—a melodramatic, posturing title that gives no idea of what the story is really about. It deals with a group of men—thirty-two, the remains of "C" Company, under the command of Major Gerrard (Leo Genn)—in Tunisia in the spring of 1943. They are sent forward to occupy and hold as an observation post a derelict farmhouse in the desert, preparing the way for the final offensive against Tunis, and the film quite straightforwardly shows us how they do it.

There is remarkably little to say about the picture except that it is excellently and satisfyingly done. It is not a collection of individual portraits. One gets glimpses of all the men, and a few—including the brash young officer (Michael Medwin) just out from England, who is sent up with five more men to relieve—are able to establish themselves as characters, but essentially the picture is a most convincing account of a group in action, and its powerful hold on the attention comes from nothing more than supreme competence in the telling and



[*The Steel Bayonet*]

the use of striking, persuasive detail. There is no cheap comedy, there are no heroics: the men are already battle-weary and had hoped for a rest, and a couple of them matter-of-factly discuss the prospects of deserting and disappearing in Algiers ("other blokes have done it"). But from beginning to grim, quiet end the unpretentious, uncomplicated episode is intensely gripping, interesting, often moving. It is a worthwhile film that leaves you stimulated as well as impressed.

Now for something very much glossier. The CinemaScope, Eastman Colour tour of the Isles of Greece you get in *Boy on a Dolphin* (Director: Jean Negulesco) is alone worth the price of admission, Sophia Loren in her first Hollywood film is far more attractive than she ever was before, and the story itself is entertaining enough; but one has to admit that it's the sheerest hokum. Miss Loren appears as Phaedra, a peasant girl who is sponge-diving when she finds a two-thousand-year-old treasure, a golden boy riding a bronze dolphin, at the bottom of the sea; and as soon as we discover that Calder, the archaeologist she tells about it, is Alan Ladd (of all people), it is not very difficult to foresee the ending.

Complications come by way of another archaeologist, Parmalee (Clifton Webb), who wants the treasure for himself, in contrast to Calder, who proposes to give it to the Greek people. There are other complications, including the well-knit Rhif (Jorge Mistral), to whom at the

beginning of the picture Phaedra is betrothed; and the story (from the novel by David Divine) has a good deal of quite violent action. But the main point of the whole affair is visual, and visually (director of photography: Milton Krasner) it is quite lovely. There are many underwater shots: both Miss Loren and Mr. Ladd seem to be doing most of their own diving, and it is fascinating to watch them at it. One can enjoy the thing as a spectacle while still recognizing it as hokum.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

With *The Steel Bayonet* is a comedy about Hollywood, *The Fuzzy Pink Nightgown*, which has a good idea, gives Jane Russell a chance to act, and works up to its contrived sentimental ending by way of much very good satirical fun. *Typhoon sur Nagasaki* is well worth seeing even for the typhoon alone. The excellent musical *Funny Face* (8/5/57), the spectacularly beautiful Italian documentary *The Lost Continent* (24/4/57) and its running mate the brilliant little Italian story about schoolboys, *Friends for Life*, continue.

Most important release, *Twelve Angry Men* (1/5/57)—don't miss this. *Oh, Men! Oh, Women!* (8/5/57) is extremely funny. As horror films go, *The Curse of Frankenstein* (15/5/57) is unusually well done. And two old ones are reissued—*From Here to Eternity* (25/11/53) and *Cockleshell Heroes* (30/11/55).

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Channel Nine
Tunnellers

THE rejection by the I.T.A. of a proposed series of programmes (backed by the Institute of Directors) on the charms of private enterprise has received less notice in the Press than it deserves. Is Sir Kenneth Clark interpreting the Authority's charter too narrowly? How is it possible to draw a fair line between plain commercials extolling the products of private enterprise, and sponsored programmes extolling its method? Would these programmes be acceptable if they were balanced by others putting the views of the Co-ops, left-wing unions and Commies? Is it wise—bearing in mind the public's appalling ignorance of our crazy mixed-up system of economic determinism—to turn down *any* thought-provoking pabulum for the mass audience on TV?

A majority of Fleet Street viewers seem to be in favour of the I.T.A. decision, but I suspect that their motives are only partially inspired by burning altruism and a native sense of fair play: more programmes on steel mills, cotton factories and private transport might mean some reduction in the nightly ration of give-away shows and commercial jingles.

The most amusing idea put forward—without a doubt—is that the whole business was engineered by the commercial TV industry working in league with Dr. Charles Hill. If the Socialists win their way back to Downing Street at the next election they are more than



[The Jack Jackson Show]

JACK JACKSON "TIDDLES" PADDIE O'NEIL

likely to throw a few spanners into the I.T.A. machine. Build up goodwill for independent TV now, prove to the public that it is not the willing tool of capitalist exploiters, and Mr. Bevan, Mr. Shinwell and other ardent nationalists may be forced to think again. I should like to accept this ludicrous notion, but to do so would be to credit those involved with more wit and acumen than they possess.

Another pleasing series is the weekly half-hour of "Outlook" (I.T.A.). The programme on "Primitive Tribes" was extremely good—original and uninhibited film being laced with expert studio discussion. The little screen can handle such subjects as travel and race relations with the cosy intimacy of an absorbing volume of non-fiction, and as more exciting film becomes available the chances are that programmes like

current hits and glimpse most of the momentary starlets. And I find it an advantage, when chatting with teenagers, to have my small-talk reasonably up-to-date.

The more I see and hear of *Under Milk Wood* the more amazed I am that so much wild and undisciplined rhetoric should have produced so great a splash in the world of letters. If monkeys typing to infinity are capable of producing Shakespeare, then surely one might expect something better from Thomas's garrulous opus than a handful of felicitous poetic images. But the B.B.C. television production was astonishingly interesting. The whole thing was put over at a cracking pace, the designs were delightful and the camera-work wonderfully neat.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



"Snow shoes? Geiger counters?"

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